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ON PROTECTING THE MARITIME BORDERS -- LEVERAGING LAW ENFORCEMENT
COOPERATION TO ENHANCE SECURITY ALONG AMERICA'S COASTS.
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SUBCOMMITTEE ON BORDER AND MARITIME SECURITY
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Good morning Chairman Miller, Ranking Member Cuellar, and distinguished members of the subcommittee. I am honored to appear before you today to speak about Coast Guard cooperation with our law enforcement partners at the federal, state, local, territorial and tribal levels. I will discuss our current cooperation in the areas of maritime drug and alien migrant interdiction as well as joint capabilities under development.

A LAYERED ENFORCEMENT STRATEGY

The Coast Guard has the statutory authority and responsibility under 14 U.S.C. § 2 and § 89 to enforce all applicable federal laws on, under, and over the high seas, in addition to waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States. With this authority, the Coast Guard takes a layered approach to interdict threats well before they reach our maritime borders by disrupting the maritime movement of illegal drugs with a continuous law enforcement presence. This layered approach is risk-based and facilitated by our participation within the national intelligence community so we can position our limited resources against the Nation's most emergent threats. The Coast Guard also plans and coordinates risk-based border security, counter-drug, and migrant enforcement missions with other Department of Homeland Security (DHS) components, particularly Customs and Border Protection (CBP) which plays a prominent role in our shared maritime environment and border protection strategy. We also benefit from our military, federal, state, local, territorial, and tribal partnerships in advancing domain awareness and conducting joint law enforcement and maritime security operations. Our Interagency Operations Center program provides the connective command and control to harmonize operations at the local level. At the global level, we leverage our 41 counter-drug bilateral agreements to level the playing field against maritime drug smugglers who operate across borders.

INTERNATIONAL / HIGH SEAS

To help deter criminal activity prior to reaching our borders, the Coast Guard establishes and fosters strategic relationships with other nations. The International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code provides an international regime to ensure ship and port facilities take appropriate preventive security measures similar to our domestic regime in the Maritime Transportation Security Act. As part of the International Port Security (IPS) Program, Coast Guard men and women are placed in foreign ports to assess the effectiveness of antiterrorism measures, which ultimately reduces risk to U.S. ports. Over the past two years, the Coast Guard has conducted assessments at 500 ports in more than 150 countries. Vessels arriving to the U.S. from non-ISPS compliant countries are required to take additional security precautions, submit to boarding by the Coast Guard before being granted permission to enter, and may be refused entry in specific cases.

The Coast Guard uses a multifaceted approach to support maritime smuggling interdiction that includes deployment of long range assets and Law Enforcement Detachments (LEDET) aboard U.S. Navy and Allied assets to support detection, monitoring, interdiction, and apprehension operations for Joint Interagency Task Force South (JIATF- South). CBP, Coast Guard, and U.S. Navy aviation assets provide long range surveillance, while Coast Guard National Security Cutters and other major Cutters – augmented by U.S. Navy ships with LEDETs – provide surface interdiction capability. Supported by intelligence and targeting information, these assets patrol the six million square mile transit zone looking for signs of illicit activity. DHS is the largest asset provider for these activities in the transit zone, accounting for more than 80 percent of all interdictions in the JIATF-S area of operations. Along the Mexican coast off the Baja Peninsula and in the Gulf of Mexico, the Coast Guard conducts joint and combined operations like Operations BAJA OLEADA in southern California and GULF WATCH in the Gulf of Mexico with the Department of Defense and Joint Task Force-North. Our assets, in cooperation with the Mexican Navy, continue to search for weapons and money on southbound vessels, and drugs and migrants on northbound vessels.

NORTHERN BORDER

The Coast Guard and our fellow DHS components have built strong relationships with Canadian law enforcement agencies to target illicit activity across our Northern border, including the maritime border, through efforts such as the creation of Integrated Border Enforcement Teams (IBET) comprised of Coast Guard, CBP, Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE), Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and Canada Border Services Agency. Guided by intelligence from the IBETs, the Integrated Cross-border Maritime Law Enforcement Operations, or ShipRider program, provide effective tools to respond to cross-border illicit activities. While ShipRider-like operations for specific special events have demonstrated success, implementation of the full program is pending ratification from the Canadian Parliament. Recently, a separate ad-hoc joint operation between the Coast Guard, CBP and the RCMP seized \$2.6 million in Canadian currency that was tossed from a small, unlit vessel. Interagency cooperation is also achieved through Border Enforcement and Security Task Forces (BESTs), which are led by ICE primarily in land border areas around the ports of entry. The Coast Guard Investigative Service supports the efforts of BESTs by coordinating operations directed at narcotic and human smuggling conducted in major seaports and cross-border crime initiatives with the Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force.

In line with these efforts, President Obama and Prime Minister Harper recently signed a declaration entitled *Beyond the Border: A Shared Vision for Perimeter Security and Economic Competitiveness* to pursue a joint perimeter approach to security, work together at and away from the borders to enhance security, and accelerate the legitimate flow of people, goods, and services between the two countries. The Coast Guard Maritime Intelligence Fusion Center Atlantic has been partnering with our Canadian allies in Halifax, Nova Scotia to tactically enhance maritime situational awareness in the North Atlantic. This productive cooperation has centered on sharing information regarding mutual security concerns along the shared maritime border of the St. Lawrence Seaway, Great Lakes, and other nautical approaches to North America.

BILATERAL AGREEMENTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

To increase the operational reach of U.S. assets, and to enable partner nation assets to patrol and respond to threats in their own sovereign waters, the U.S. Government has entered into 41 bilateral maritime counter-drug law enforcement agreements. Additionally, the Coast Guard has developed non-binding operational procedures with Mexico, Ecuador, and Peru to facilitate communications between operation centers for the confirmation of registry requests and for permission to stop, board, and search vessels. Coast Guard law enforcement and border security capabilities are evident at both the national and the port level. When the Coast Guard is alerted to a threat to the U.S., requiring a coordinated U.S. Government response, the Maritime Operational Threat Response (MOTR) plan is activated. The MOTR plan uses established protocols and an integrated network of national-level maritime command and operations centers for initiating real-time federal interagency communication, coordination, and decision-making to ensure timely and decisive response to counter maritime threats.

SENIOR GUIDANCE TEAM

The Coast Guard, CBP, and ICE Senior Guidance Team (SGT) is chartered at the component level to improve near and long-term efficiency and effectiveness across DHS. The SGT is an executive coordination body that has led a number of interagency initiatives. Recently, the SGT has led the drafting of the DHS Maritime Operations Coordination Plan to ensure operational coordination, planning, information sharing, intelligence integration, and response activities and facilitated the promulgation of the DHS Small Vessel Security Implementation Plan.

MARITIME INTELLIGENCE AND TARGETING

As the lead agency for maritime homeland security, the Coast Guard screens ships, crews, and passengers of all vessels required to submit a 96-hour Notice of Arrival to a U.S. port. In general, these requirements apply to U.S. and foreign commercial and recreational vessels over 300 gross tons. In 2010, the Coast Guard screened more than 257,000 ships and 71.2 million people. Screening of the crew and passengers is performed by the Intelligence Coordination Center's Coastwatch Division, which is co-located with CBP efforts at the National Targeting Center, while the two Maritime Intelligence Fusion Centers focus on screening the vessel itself. These Centers associate relevant intelligence and law enforcement analysis to specific vessels, assess vessel activity. Coast Guard's screening results are passed to the appropriate Coast Guard Sector Command Center, local intelligence staffs, CBP, and other partners to share information regarding the the potential risk posed by a vessel. The relationship between the Coast Guard Maritime Intelligence Fusion Center Atlantic and the CBP Office of Air and Marine assets has improved communication between Coast Guard and CBP assets and enabled the passing of targeted information, which has been pivotal in our successful collaboration efforts.

AT THE PORT

Coast Guard Captains of the Port are designated as the Federal Maritime Security Coordinator for their port, leading the Area Maritime Security (AMS) Committees and overseeing the development and regular review of the AMS Plans. AMS Committees have developed strong working relationships with other federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies in an environment that fosters maritime stakeholder participation. The Joint Harbor Operations Center (JHOC) in San Diego, California represents another example of the evolution of joint operations in a port. Located at Coast Guard Sector San Diego, the JHOC is manned with CBP, Coast Guard, and local Marine Police watchstanders. The JHOC coordinated operations contributed directly to the interdiction of 792 undocumented immigrants and 27,000 lbs of marijuana and cocaine in FY 2010. On a national scale,

the establishment of Interagency Operations Centers (IOC) for port security is also well underway and IOCs have recently opened in San Francisco and New Orleans to further facilitate coordination and information sharing at the port. The Coast Guard , CBP, and other agencies are sharing workspace and coordinating operational efforts for improved efficiencies and effectiveness of maritime assets in ports around the country such as in Charleston, Puget Sound, San Diego, Boston, and Jacksonville.

CONCLUSION

These successful partnerships and strategies have been and continue to be essential to the interdiction of narcotics, suspected drug smugglers, illicit vessels, and undocumented migrants attempting to enter the United States by our maritime borders. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I will be happy to answer any questions you may have.